

1 CLAIMS:

2 1. A method of producing a pH enhanced comminuted meat product, the method comprising
3 the steps of:

4 (a) placing an initial comminuted meat product in contact with ammonia to produce
5 an intermediate meat product having a pH higher than the initial comminuted
6 meat product;

7 (b) removing ammonia from the surface of the intermediate meat product; and

8 (c) applying mechanical action to the intermediate meat product after removing
9 ammonia from the surface of the intermediate meat product.

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11 2. The method of Claim 1 wherein the step of removing ammonia from the surface of the
12 intermediate meat product includes heating the intermediate meat product.

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14 3. The method of Claim 1 wherein the step of removing ammonia from the surface of the
15 intermediate meat product includes applying a vacuum to the intermediate meat product.

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17 4. The method of Claim 3 wherein the step of removing ammonia from the surface of the
18 intermediate meat product includes heating the intermediate meat product.

1 5. The method of Claim 1 wherein the step of applying mechanical action to the
2 intermediate meat product includes blending the intermediate meat product or pumping
3 the intermediate meat product through a conduit.

4
5 6. The method of Claim 1 wherein the step of applying mechanical action to the
6 intermediate meat product includes blending the intermediate meat product.

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8 7. The method of Claim 1 wherein the step of removing ammonia from the surface of the
9 intermediate meat product includes flushing the surface of the intermediate meat product
10 with a fluid.

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12 8. A method of producing a pH enhanced comminuted meat product, the method comprising
13 the steps of:

14 (a) placing an initial comminuted meat product in contact with ammonia to produce
15 an intermediate meat product having a pH higher than the initial comminuted
16 meat product; and

17 (b) applying a primary mechanical action to the intermediate meat product while
18 simultaneously removing excess ammonia from the surface of the intermediate
19 meat product.
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1 9. The method of Claim 8 further including the step of applying an initial mechanical action
2 to the intermediate meat product by pumping the intermediate meat product through a
3 conduit prior to applying the primary mechanical action.

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5 10. The method of Claim 8 further including the step of applying a secondary mechanical
6 action to the intermediate meat product by pumping the intermediate meat product
7 through a conduit after applying the primary mechanical action.

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9 11. The method of Claim 8 wherein the step of placing the initial comminuted meat product
10 in contact with ammonia comprises applying ammonia gas or aqueous ammonia to the
11 initial comminuted meat product.

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13 12. The method of Claim 8 wherein the step of applying the primary mechanical action to the
14 intermediate meat product while simultaneously removing excess ammonia from the
15 intermediate meat product comprises:

16 (a) holding the intermediate meat product in a vessel under a vacuum; and

17 (b) agitating the intermediate meat product in the vessel.

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19 13. A method of producing a pH enhanced comminuted meat product, the method comprising
20 the steps of:

21 (a) forming an intermediate meat product comprising a comminuted meat product
22 having ammonium hydroxide solution formed therein;

- 1 (b) removing ammonia from the surface of the intermediate meat product; and
2 (c) applying mechanical action to the intermediate meat product after removing
3 ammonia from the surface of the intermediate meat product.
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5 14. The method of Claim 13 wherein the step of removing ammonia from the surface of the
6 intermediate meat product includes holding the intermediate meat product in a vessel
7 under a vacuum in which ammonia escapes from the surface of the intermediate meat
8 product.
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10 15. The method of Claim 14 wherein the step of applying mechanical action to the
11 intermediate meat product after removing ammonia from the surface of the intermediate
12 meat product includes agitating the intermediate meat product in the vessel.
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14 16. The method of Claim 13 wherein the step of removing ammonia from the surface of the
15 intermediate meat product includes directing a flushing fluid over the surface of the
16 intermediate meat product.
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